

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are currently pending. No claims are being amended.

Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing claims 1-15.

Claims 16-20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Guercio et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,796,815 ("Guercio").

Claim 16 provides a method of minimizing an overall voltage during a ringing function, the method comprising applying a tip signal to a tip terminal, applying a ring ringing signal to a first terminal of a network, attenuating the ring ringing signal through a capacitive network, and applying the attenuated ring ringing signal to a ring terminal. It should be emphasized that the ring ringing signal must be attenuated *prior* to being applied to the ring terminal. By the time the ring ringing signal is applied to the ring terminal, it has already been attenuated.

Guercio does not disclose, teach or suggest all of the recited elements of claim 16. In contrast, Guercio discloses a communications device 200 which functions as a "ring detection circuit" (Col. 8, line 64 to Col. 9, line 6; Col. 4, lines 7-9; Col. 5, lines 54-56). Communications device 200 detects a ring signal from a telephone line at ring terminal 202, and then utilizes a capacitor 206 to attenuate the amplitude of the detected ring signal to fall within the allowable input voltage range of a communications circuit 210. Specifically, the amplitude of the ring signal at ring terminal 202 "far exceeds" the maximum allowable input voltage range of a common analog-to-digital converter 304 used in communications circuit 210, and thus the amplitude of the ring signal must be "greatly reduced (i.e., substantially attenuated)" before being applied to common analog-to-digital converter 304 (Col. 4, lines 39-44). As a result, communications device 200 does not apply any kind of ring signal to ring terminal 202 at all, but instead merely *detects* a ring signal from ring terminal 202 and then attenuates the ring signal afterwards.

Transposing the order of the two steps (attenuation & applying the signal to the ring terminal) is a significant advance in the art, and leads to notably different behavior. In one embodiment of the present invention, the ring ringing signal is sent over a telephone line at reduced-voltage, made possible because the attenuation occurs prior to the ring ringing signal

being applied to the ring terminal. Guercio does not allow the transmission of an attenuated signal over a telephone line because it requires the receipt of a ring signal from the telephone line first before it can attenuate anything. Furthermore, the teachings of Guercio are applicable only at the user outlet, after transmission of the ring signal over telephone lines. In contrast, the embodiment of the present invention allows attenuation in the telephone exchange. As described above, this allows transmission over telephone lines of a reduced-voltage signal, a result not possible under Guercio.

Therefore, because Guercio does not disclose, teach or suggest all of the recited elements of claim 16, claim 16 is not anticipated by Guercio and is in condition for allowance. Claims 17 and 18 depend on claim 16, and thus, are also in condition for allowance.

Claim 19 provides a method of minimizing an overall voltage during a ringing function, the method comprising applying a tip signal to a tip terminal, applying a ring signal to a first terminal of a network, attenuating the ring signal through a capacitor, applying the attenuated ring signal to a ring terminal, and shorting the capacitor when receiving a positive bias at the ring terminal with respect to the tip terminal. It should be emphasized that the ring ringing signal must be attenuated prior to being applied to the ring terminal. By the time the ring ringing signal is applied to the ring terminal, it has already been attenuated.

Guercio does not disclose, teach or suggest all of the recited elements of claim 19. As described in detail above, Guercio discloses a communications device 200 which detects a ring signal from a telephone line at ring terminal 202, and then utilizes a capacitor 206 to attenuate the amplitude of the detected ring signal to fall within the allowable input voltage range of an analog-to-digital converter 304 in communications circuit 210. As a result, communications device 200 does not apply any kind of ring signal to ring terminal 202 at all, but instead merely *detects* a ring signal from ring terminal 202 and then attenuates the ring signal afterwards.

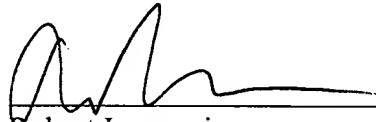
Therefore, because Guercio does not disclose, teach or suggest all of the recited elements of claim 19, claim 19 is not anticipated by Guercio and is in condition for allowance. Claim 20 depends on claim 19, and thus, is also in condition for allowance.

The Director is authorized to charge any additional fees due by way of this Amendment, or credit any overpayment, to our Deposit Account No. 19-1090.

All of the claims remaining in the application are now clearly allowable. Favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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